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Detectives Inc.™
A TERROR OF DYING DREAMS
COLAN Lei.
BOB RAINIER AND TED DENNING ARE ABOUT TO MEET DIERDRE SEVENS--
--AND SPARKS ARE GOING TO FLY!
The New Graphic Mystery by Don McGregor and Gene Colan

The PENUMBRA

WRITE TO: ECLIPSE COMICS - P.O. BOX 1099 - FORESTVILLE - CALIFORNIA - 95436

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Can Reid get his job as a milkman back?

NOT SO LONG AGO: It was in the Penumbra for January of this year, just six short months ago, that i ventured the opinion that comic book censorship, then a hot topic of debate in the fan press, was a tempest in a teapot and would soon be a dead issue. I got quite a few letters in response, some agreeing with me, some theorizing that i had severely underestimated the powerful forces of repression which faced us at the time.

Can i say "i told you so" now?

When i wrote that column, CIA Director William Casey had just had a seizure but had not yet been hospitalized. Attorney General Edwin Meese was beginning to drop his war on pornography and war on drugs campaigns to look into the Iran-Contra arms scandal, but the Tower Commission had not yet convened. The evangelical PTL Club was in full flower, damning everything which did not live up to its high moral standards.

Yet somehow, against all "informed opinion," i sensed the winds of change in the air, sensed the ebbing of the censorship tide before it turned... and hoped that my nose for these things was good.

When a certain issue of one of our books kicked up a dust storm, we rode it out, confident that the public didn't need protection from the simple, homely facts surrounding childbirth. We were right: no retailer got arrested for selling the issue, and we did not have to lay the heavy yoke of censorship down upon the writer or artist.

On the other hand, when the Distinguished Competition alienated a whole pack of writers and artists with its new rating system, i worried a little: maybe we were wrong in thinking we could support a free press in the comics industry as it is supported in the book trade. Maybe our zealous commitment to artistic freedom would get us in dutch with the unknown and as-yet unnamed "them" who were "out to get us" and who planned to send comics into the Code Age again.

Today William Casey is dead and ex-General Richard Secord is testifying—spilling his guts, rather—about the arms shipment racket, CIA involvement with hostile nations, and his contact with President Reagan's advisors throughout a series of illegal covert operations. There is mounting evidence of CIA-backed drug smuggling too, and suddenly the lights have gone out at the government's war on drugs campaign headquarters: the loudest sound currently emanating from these outposts of imposed chemical purity are the little whirrs and clicks of document shredders running in darkened rooms at night.

Today the PTL is in disarray following allegations of sexual and fiduciary misconduct by its leaders, Jim and Tammy Bakker. Fellow preachers Jimmy Lee Swaggart and Jerry Falwell don't even want to take over their organization, for fear the taint might rub off on them—and today too the newspapers have broken a damning story of Swaggart's financial profiteering in the realm of evangelism, so he may be the next to fall from grace.

Today the leading Democratic presidential hopeful, Gary Hart, is being accused in print of immorality, adultery, and "womanizing." His chances of election look slim indeed.

Yes, today the tide has turned. Hypocrisy in high places has been deliciously revealed, and its revelation removes the powers of our would-be censors utterly, completely, thoroughly.

Today we are free again, free to follow our own ethical and moral precepts—for who today, May 7th, 1987, could stand upon a soap box and demand that comic books—COMIC BOOKS!—be made as pure as the PTL, as moral as the Democratic Party's leaders, as law-abiding as the Republican administration?

Thank god we're free again.

catherine yronwode

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THIS IS FOR ED VIA WHO BELIEVED ENOUGH IN DENNING, RAINIER, AND DIERDRE TO STAND OUT IN THE COLD, SHOULDER TO SHOULDER, TO HELP BRING THEM TO MOVIE-LIFE, AND KEPT THE FAITH WHEN THE GOING GOT ROUGH.

Bob Rainier gazes across Broadway at the *electrically enticing* lights of the sex spas.

Garish letters scream of *topless dancers* and *aural sex,* each act inscribed vividly on individual steps that lead up to some promised *orgasmic heaven.*

Whenever he looks at *hospital entrances,* Ted Denning returns to being seventeen.

His mother had been in the hospital that time, too. She had needed a *blood transfusion.*

Certain of his relatives, who were Jehovah's Witnesses, had *condemned* him and his father for allowing the doctors to pump new blood into her veins to save her life.

They said that he and his father had *sinned* and consigned her soul to hell.

Dierdre Sevens stares at the house. Comfortable. Warm glow of lights.

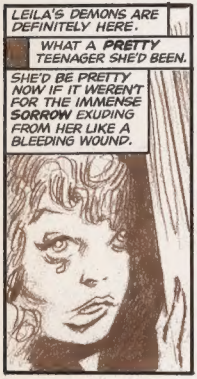
She shouldn't go in there.

This home could be more horrifying than a house on a haunted hill, or a home possessed *not* by poltergeists or Satan—but by the *dark cruelties* human beings can inflict on each other.

PLEASANT CHIMES TINKLE INSIDE AT THE PUSH OF A BUTTON.
BUZZ

SUMMONING DEMONS?

LEILA'S?
MY OWN?


LEILA'S DEMONS ARE DEFINITELY HERE.
WHAT A PRETTY TEENAGER SHE'D BEEN.
SHE'D BE PRETTY NOW IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE IMMENSE SORROW EXUDING FROM HER LIKE A BLEEDING WOUND.

RAINIER STARES AT THE POSTERS, NOT WITH LUST BUT WITH RESIGNATION.
GIRLS GIRLS

HE SIGHS DEEPLY--
2

-- AS IF HE MIGHT JUST WALK AWAY.

BUT HE DOESN'T.

DENNING TRIES TO RUB THE FIFTEEN-YEAR OLD MEMORY AWAY.
BUT STILL THE TIME COMES BACK TO HAUNT HIM...
AH, MOM.
JEEZ, MOM.
--LIKE A PHOTOGRAPH THAT DEVELOPS IN HIS BRAIN AT THE FIRST BREATH OF MEDICINAL, DISINFECTANT-SATURATED HOSPITAL AIR.
DENNING SPOTS HIS FATHER. HE HAS SELDOM SEEN THE OLD MAN CAUGHT UNAWARE THAT HE IS BEING OBSERVED.
WAITING ROOM
THE SOLEMN, QUIET FACE IS ALIEN TO HIM.
IT IS NOT A FACIAL EXPRESSION THAT HE ASSOCIATES WITH GILES DENNING, WITH HIS POP.
HEY, POP!
THERE YOU ARE, KID!
BEEN TOO LONG I SEEN YOUR FACE.
3

YEAH. WELL.
THE DAYS GET AWAY FROM YOU. WHAT'VE YOU BEEN DOING THE LAST MONTH?
THE USUAL. A LITTLE HUSTLING AROUND. YOU LIVED WITH A FREELANCE ARTIST LONG ENOUGH-- YOU KNOW WHAT THE ROUTINE IS LIKE.
HOW'S THE PRIVATE EYE BIZ?
WE'RE DETECTIVES, DAD. INVESTIGATORS.
NOT PRIVATE EYES.
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT TO CALL IT, TED. YOU CAN CALL IT GODDAMNED SHERLOCK HOLMES, IF YOU WANT--
--BUT THAT'S STILL ONE STRANGE PROFESSION YOU GOT YOURSELF IN.
YOU DIDN'T GET THE IDEA TO BUY YOURSELF A TRENCHCOAT AND A .45 FROM ME.
WOULDN'T CATCH ME IN NO ALLEY--
--SKULKING AROUND, WHATEVER IT IS YOU GUYS DO.
WE DON'T SKULK IN ALLEYS.
4

DIERDRE SEES THE LIES THAT HAVE AGED LEILA, NOT ONLY IN THE PREMATURE LINES IN HER FACE, OR THE DESPERATION IN HER EYES--
--BUT IN HER STANCE AND MOVEMENTS, AS WELL.
LOVE SONG LYRICS TURNED INTO UNATTAINABLE FANTASIES.
DREAMS OF PROTECTION, BATTERED.
THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL LIES BECOME HARDER TO SUSTAIN WITH EACH PASSING DAY AND NIGHT.
THERE IS A CANCEROUS AWARENESS OF THE LIES VIGOROUSLY DENIED.
IT IS THE DENIAL OF THE LIES THAT AGES LEILA AND FILLS HER WITH GREAT TERROR--
--AS IF THE TRUTH WILL LEAVE HER ABANDONED AND HOPELESS.
DIERDRE... THANK YOU FOR COMING. I...
SORRY... SORRY TO HAVE CALLED YOU SO LATE. OUT OF THE BLUE AND EVERYTHING.
PLEASE... FORGIVE ME.

DRINKS! WE NEED SOMETHING TO DRINK. RIGHT! WHAT WOULD YOU...

YOU DIDN'T CALL ME HERE FOR DRINKS, LEILA.
I JUST... IT WAS SO BAD THIS TIME... I KNOW IT WAS TERRIBLY IMPOLITE... CALLING SOMEONE YOU HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO IN...

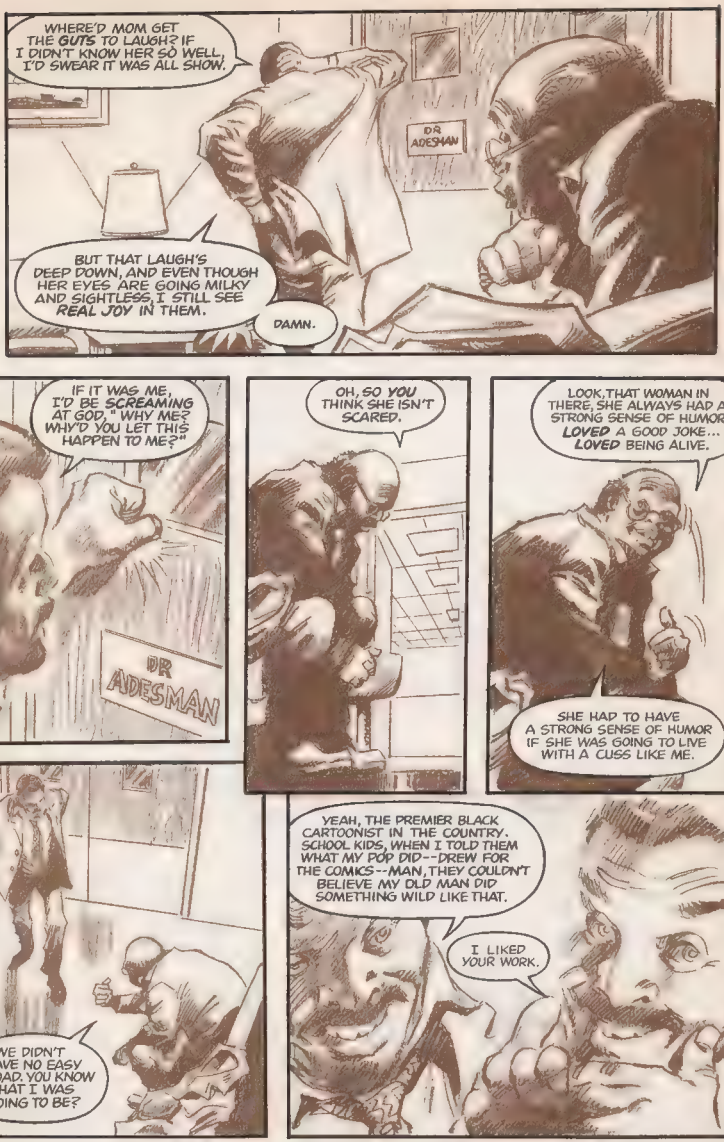
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE SAW EACH OTHER?
MUST HAVE BEEN TWO YEARS AGO, ANYHOW... AT THAT DUMB CLASS REUNION.

THAT'S WHEN YOU MET DOUG... HE... HE HADN'T WANTED TO GO THAT NIGHT... BUT HE DID...
...FOR ME.
YOU REMEMBER DOUG? WHO CAN FORGET DOUG?

YES. HE ENTERTAINED EVERYBODY.
IT'S A GIFT HE HAS. HE CAN CHARM MILK FROM A KITTEN.

LEILA...ON THE PHONE...I HAD DIFFICULTY MAKING OUT EVERYTHING YOU SAID, BUT...
I WAS... OVERREACTING. DOUG SAYS I DO THAT A LOT.
I...I KNOW I DO IT... IT'S JUST...WHEN HE LEFT... AFTER WE HAD FOUGHT... THE PLACE WAS EMPTY...
IT WAS LIKE I COULD HEAR TIME TICKING, MINUTES DYING...I WAS HERE, BUT I WASN'T ANYWHERE.
I WAS JUST FREAKING OUT. YOU KNOW HOW IT IS. I REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE DISTURBED YOU.
IT'S OKAY. LOOK, LEILA, YOU KNOW WHAT I DO.
YES, YOU TALKED ABOUT YOUR JOB AS A SOCIAL WORKER. IT SEEMED...SO WORTHWHILE. I WAS REALLY HAPPY FOR YOU.
LEILA, I SEE WOMEN...MORE WOMEN THAN I CAN BELIEVE SOMETIMES... IN... SITUATIONS LIKE YOURS.
OH, IT'S... IT'S NOT SO...BAD... I TOLD YOU...I EXAGGERATE...
DOUG...HE'S BEEN UNDER A LOT OF STRESS. STRESS IS VERY BAD, YOU KNOW. CAUSES LOTS OF SICKNESSES -- YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW MANY.
HE'S GOT THIS DEAL WITH MR. CURRUTHERS ...DEMANDS SO MUCH TIME... IT'S OUR CHANCE TO BE REALLY SUCCESSFUL.
HOW OFTEN DOES HE HIT YOU?
I LOVE HIM.

RAINIER EXITS FROM THE GARISH, AMMONIA-SCENTED STAIRWAY LIKE A GUILTY ZOMBIE.
CONDEMNATIONS AND RECRIMINATIONS AND DISSATISFACTION FLASH LIKE STROBE LIGHTS, BRIGHTER THAN THE STARLIT ENTICEMENTS.
THE GIRL'S NEARNESS BRINGS HIM BACK FROM HIS DISPLACEMENT.
WANNA DATE, HONEY?
WHO?
AH! A WORKING GIRL. ONE NOT TRYING TOO HARD ON A SLOW OCTOBER NIGHT.
A DATE, HUH? I'LL BET YOU GIVE GREAT EUPHEMISM.
YOU EVER SEEN THAT MOVIE, 'DEEP THROAT'?
THAT'S THE ONE, ISN'T IT? THOUSANDS OF PORN FILMS SINCE, AVAILABLE NOW IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD VIDEO STORE...
...AND MAYBE DELI...
...BUT THE BUZZ WORD, THE ONE THAT GETS THE MESSAGE ACROSS, STRAIGHT AND FAST--
--IS 'DEEP THROAT'
YOU KNOW, THERE WAS A TIME I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY NEWSPAPERS REFUSED TO RUN THOSE TWO WORDS TOGETHER. DIDN'T DAWN ON ME WHAT THEY MEANT.
ISN'T THAT A KICKER?
DID I REALLY NOT KNOW?
THE WEIRDOS! THAT'S ALL I MEET. SWEAR TO GOD.
JUST ONCE, YOU'D THINK I'D GET A STRAIGHT JOHN--
--JUST WANTS TO GET IT ON AND THEN ON HIS WAY. BUT NOPE! NOT ME! AMERICAN MEN!
GAH-DAMN! THEY ALL WANNA BE PHIL DONAHUE OR SOMETHIN'!


WHERE'D MOM GET THE GUTS TO LAUGH? IF I DIDN'T KNOW HER SO WELL, I'D SWEAR IT WAS ALL SHOW.
DR ADESMAN
BUT THAT LAUGH'S DEEP DOWN, AND EVEN THOUGH HER EYES ARE GOING MILKY AND SIGHTLESS, I STILL SEE REAL JOY IN THEM.
DAMN.
IF IT WAS ME, I'D BE SCREAMING AT GOD, "WHY ME? WHY'D YOU LET THIS HAPPEN TO ME?"
DR ADESMAN
OH, SO YOU THINK SHE ISN'T SCARED.
LOOK, THAT WOMAN IN THERE, SHE ALWAYS HAD A STRONG SENSE OF HUMOR... LOVED A GOOD JOKE... LOVED BEING ALIVE.
SHE HAD TO HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF HUMOR IF SHE WAS GOING TO LIVE WITH A CUSS LIKE ME.
WE DIDN'T HAVE NO EASY ROAD, YOU KNOW WHAT I WAS GOING TO BE?
YEAH, THE PREMIER BLACK CARTOONIST IN THE COUNTRY. SCHOOL KIDS, WHEN I TOLD THEM WHAT MY POP DID--DREW FOR THE COMICS--MAN, THEY COULDN'T BELIEVE MY OLD MAN DID SOMETHING WILD LIKE THAT.
I LIKED YOUR WORK.

I GAVE IT MY BEST SHOT. BUT LISTEN... IT DIDN'T HARDLY PAY THE BILLS...
...DIDN'T GET US ANY MEDICAL COVERAGE... IN THE OLD DAYS THAT WOULD BE THE SAME AS ASKING FOR THE MOON.
AND SECURITY! SHIT, NEVER WAS ANY SECURITY IN THIS BUSINESS.
BUT YOUR MOMMA, SHE NEVER GAVE UP ON ME OR WHAT I TRIED TO DO. MORE TO THE POINT, SHE NEVER GAVE UP ON HERSELF.
AND I THINK SHE LIKED THAT THERE WERE TIMES I SAID "NO" TO SOME OF THE CRAP...
...THOSE HOTSHOT EDITORIAL GENIUSES WANTED ME TO DRAW.
DID I EVER TELL YOU I WAS PROUD OF YOU FOR DOING THAT?
THAT'S US! THIS HERE'S MY SON.
HE'S A PRIVATE EYE.
NOPE. DON'T THINK YOU EVER DID, COME TO THINK OF IT.
I WAS.
MR. DENNING, THE DOCTOR WILL SEE YOU NOW.

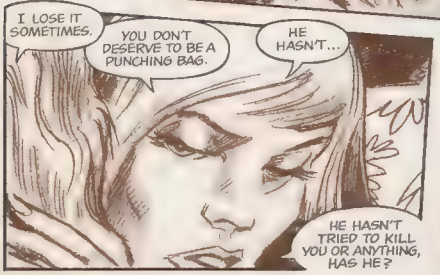
LOOK, LEILA... THERE AREN'T ANY EASY WORDS FOR ME TO SAY, NOTHING THAT MAKES EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT.
I WISH THERE WERE, BUT THERE AREN'T.
HOW BADLY DOES HE HURT YOU?

A LOT OF TIMES... I DESERVE IT... I START IT...
...I MEAN, I EGG IT ON... I KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN WHEN I START IN ON HIM. WHY DO I...

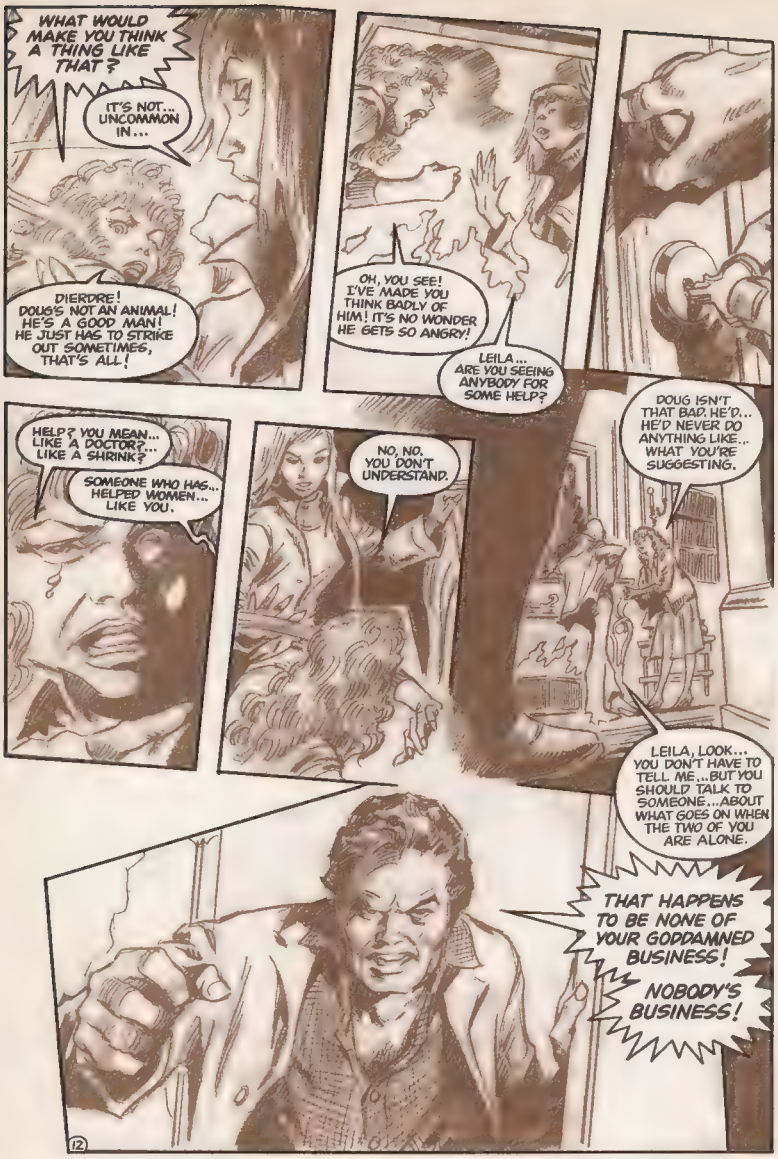
SNICT

WHY DO I DO THAT?
OKAY, OKAY! I'M INSECURE. I KNOW THAT'S PART OF IT. I KNOW WE'RE ALL SUPPOSED TO BE GETTING OURSELVES TOGETHER... BUT... I'M NOT...

SWIP


I LOSE IT SOMETIMES.
YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE A PUNCHING BAG.
HE HASN'T...
HE HASN'T TRIED TO KILL YOU OR ANYTHING, HAS HE?

CLIK

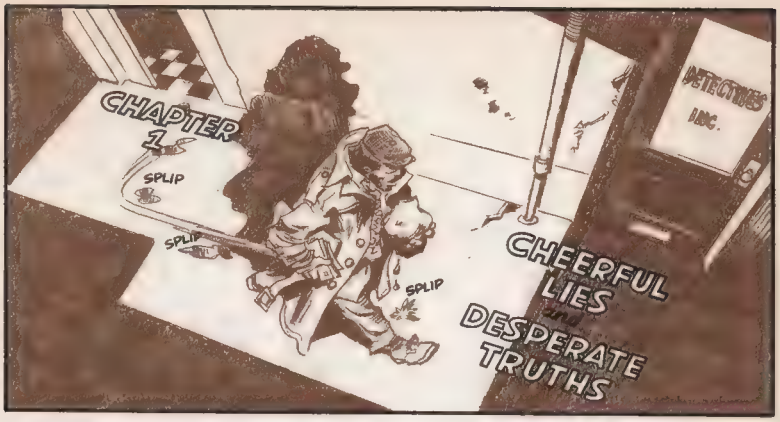

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU THINK A THING LIKE THAT?
IT'S NOT... UNCOMMON IN...
DIERDRE! DOUG'S NOT AN ANIMAL! HE'S A GOOD MAN! HE JUST HAS TO STRIKE OUT SOMETIMES, THAT'S ALL!
OH, YOU SEE! I'VE MADE YOU THINK BADLY OF HIM! IT'S NO WONDER HE GETS SO ANGRY!
LEILA... ARE YOU SEEING ANYBODY FOR SOME HELP?
DOUG ISN'T THAT BAD. HE'D... HE'D NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE... WHAT YOU'RE SUGGESTING.
HELP? YOU MEAN... LIKE A DOCTOR?... LIKE A SHRINK?
SOMEONE WHO HAS... HELPED WOMEN... LIKE YOU.
NO, NO. YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
LEILA, LOOK... YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME...BUT YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE...ABOUT WHAT GOES ON WHEN THE TWO OF YOU ARE ALONE.
THAT HAPPENS TO BE NONE OF YOUR GODDAMNED BUSINESS!
NOBODY'S BUSINESS!
12

OH, DOUG. THANK GOD, YOU'RE BACK. I...
YOU JUST HUSTLE YOUR ASS ON OUT OF HERE, LADY!
PLEASE, DOUG...THAT'S NO WAY TO TALK, YOU REMEMBER PIERDRE SEVENS. YOU MET HER AT THE...
I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS WHO SHE IS! I HEARD YOU, LEILA.
HOW DARE YOU DO THIS TO ME! PUT OUR BUSINESS ON THE STREET!
DARLING...
I'M SORRY...
...SORRY...
WHUCK!
ungh
ungh
13

YOU LISTEN TO ME, MR. BURNETT. YOU GET CONTROL OF YOURSELF BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING YOU'LL REGRET.
WHAT'D YOU SAY? COOL OFF? YOU GIVING ORDERS AROUND HERE?
STRANGER... COMES IN MY HOUSE... GIVES ME ORDERS. COMES BETWEEN ME AND MY OWN WIFE?
I JUST WANT EVERYONE TO CALM DOWN.
BEFOREE
THUD
THAT CALM ENOUGH FOR YOU?
THAT SHOW ENOUGH SELF CONTROL?
14

I SWEAR TO GOD, LEILA, YOU DON'T STOP THAT WHINING, I'M GOING TO PUT A GAG IN YOUR MOUTH.
ungh
COME ON! STAND UP STRAIGHT.
YOU AND ME, WE GOT SOME TALKING TO DO.
IN PRIVATE.
I TOLD YOU TO STAY THE...
WHAK
YOU LIKE THE FEEL OF THAT TIGER? YOU DON'T STAY WHERE YOU ARE--

--I PROMISE YOU, YOU'RE GOING TO GET HURT SO BAD EVEN MOMMA WON'T BE ABLE TO FIX IT FOR A LONG, LONG TIME!
OH, DOUG, HONEY!
HONEST, I DIDN'T WANT HER TO DO ANYTHING LIKE THIS. I JUST...
...JUST WANTED SOMEBODY TO TALK TO. NOT...
I DID NOT ASK YOU OVER HERE TO HURT MY HUSBAND.
DOUG'S RIGHT! THIS IS...IT'S FAMILY BUSINESS!
NOW, PLEASE...JUST LEAVE.
YOU WANT ME TO LEAVE, I'LL GO. I'M PROBABLY WASTING MY BREATH, BUT I'LL SAY IT ANYWAY--
--YOU GET YOURSELF SOME HELP, QUICK.
THIS HAS GOT NOWHERE TO GO BUT DOWN!
GET OUT OF HERE! NOW!
I'LL BE IN TOUCH.
DON'T BOTHER.



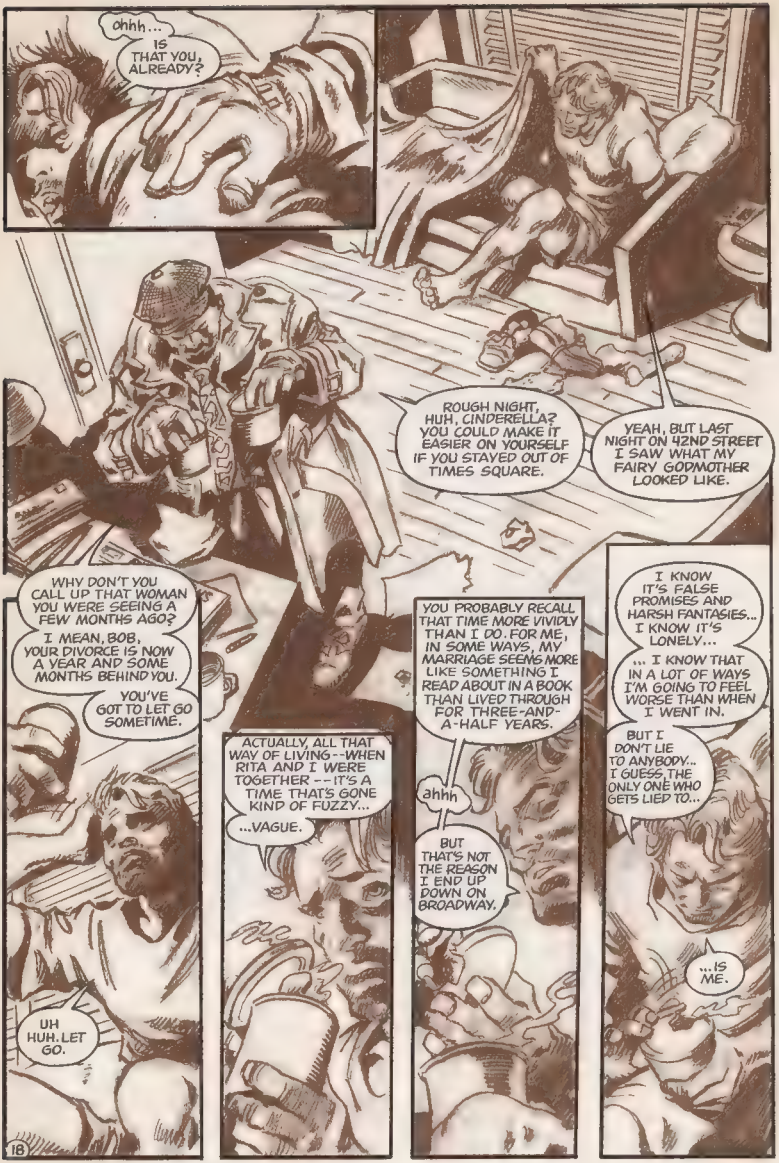
Ted Denning juggles the paper bag and office keys. The bottom of the bag is soggy, murky coffee leaking from the plastic lids that cover the two styrofoam cups.

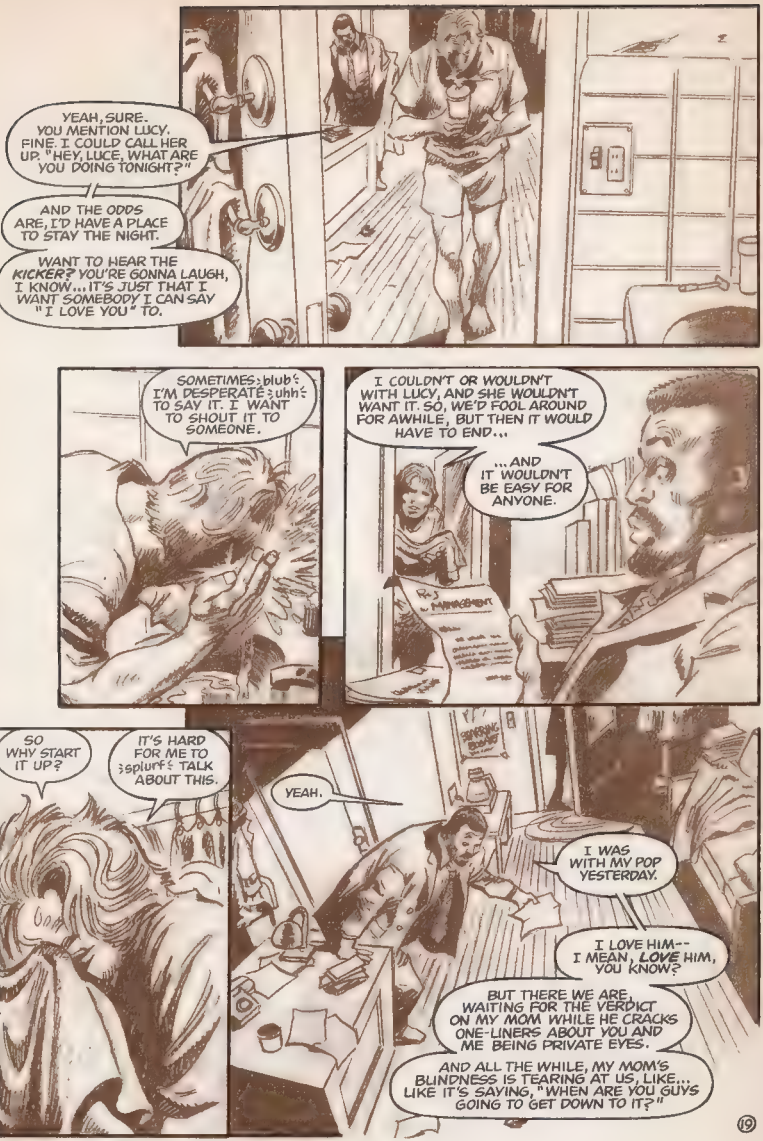
Denning likes opening the office. Likes the established procedure of collecting the mail. Hates the notices of overdue bills, but figures that it's part of the price of independence.

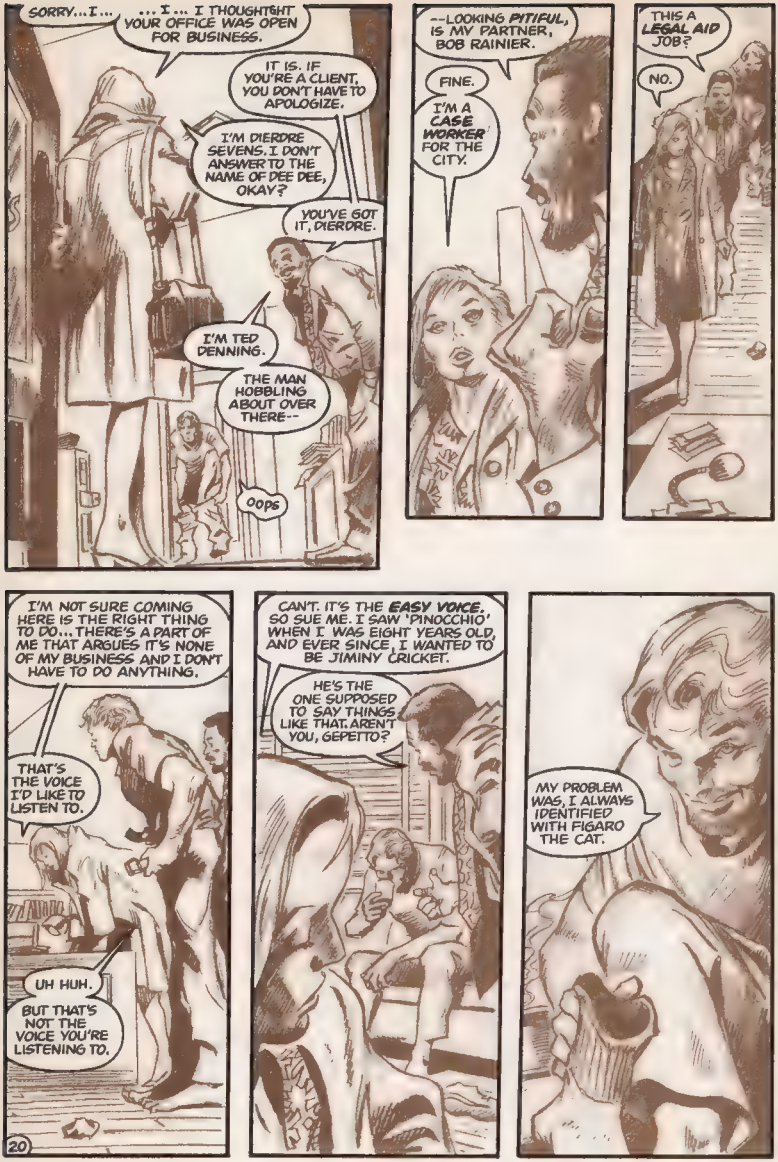
He knows Rainier has had another long night. He watches him sleeping, hair tousled. He'll comb it with his hand when he wakes, bet you anything.

Waking Rainier up reminds him of their days with the MPs—early morning reveille, eyes unfocused, a dozen stale-breathed mouths sighing and cursing. Neither of them were exactly made for the *strict regimen* and required obedience of the MPs.

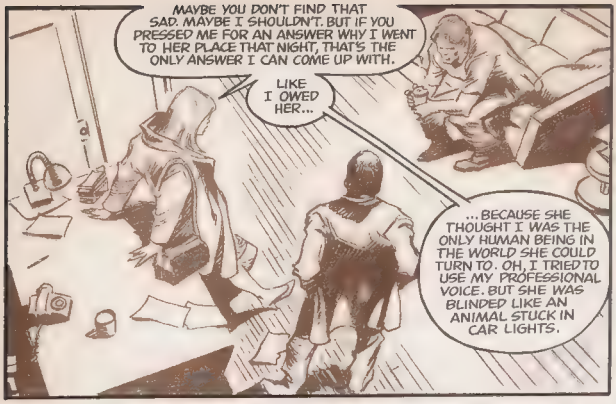
Opening the office and collecting the mail is one thing; having your day *totally dictated*, never being able to say "NO!" another.


ohhh...
IS THAT YOU, ALREADY?
ROUGH NIGHT, HUH, CINDERELLA? YOU COULD MAKE IT EASIER ON YOURSELF IF YOU STAYED OUT OF TIMES SQUARE.
YEAH, BUT LAST NIGHT ON 42ND STREET I SAW WHAT MY FAIRY GODMOTHER LOOKED LIKE.
WHY DON'T YOU CALL UP THAT WOMAN YOU WERE SEEING A FEW MONTHS AGO?
I MEAN, BOB, YOUR DIVORCE IS NOW A YEAR AND SOME MONTHS BEHIND YOU.
YOU'VE GOT TO LET GO SOMETIME.
UH HUH. LET GO.
ACTUALLY, ALL THAT WAY OF LIVING--WHEN RITA AND I WERE TOGETHER -- IT'S A TIME THAT'S GONE KIND OF FUZZY...
...VAGUE.
YOU PROBABLY RECALL THAT TIME MORE VIVIDLY THAN I DO. FOR ME, IN SOME WAYS, MY MARRIAGE SEEMS MORE LIKE SOMETHING I READ ABOUT IN A BOOK THAN LIVED THROUGH FOR THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS.
ahhh
BUT THAT'S NOT THE REASON I END UP DOWN ON BROADWAY.
I KNOW IT'S FALSE PROMISES AND HARSH FANTASIES... I KNOW IT'S LONELY...
... I KNOW THAT IN A LOT OF WAYS I'M GOING TO FEEL WORSE THAN WHEN I WENT IN.
BUT I DON'T LIE TO ANYBODY.. I GUESS, THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS LIED TO...
...IS ME.


YEAH, SURE. YOU MENTION LUCY. FINE. I COULD CALL HER UP. "HEY, LUCE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING TONIGHT?"
AND THE ODDS ARE, I'D HAVE A PLACE TO STAY THE NIGHT.
WANT TO HEAR THE KICKER? YOU'RE GONNA LAUGH, I KNOW... IT'S JUST THAT I WANT SOMEBODY I CAN SAY "I LOVE YOU" TO.
SOMETIMES; blub; I'M DESPERATE; uhh; TO SAY IT. I WANT TO SHOUT IT TO SOMEONE.
I COULDN'T OR WOULDN'T WITH LUCY, AND SHE WOULDN'T WANT IT. SO, WE'D FOOL AROUND FOR AWHILE, BUT THEN IT WOULD HAVE TO END...
...AND IT WOULDN'T BE EASY FOR ANYONE.
SO WHY START IT UP?
IT'S HARD FOR ME TO ;splurf; TALK ABOUT THIS.
YEAH.
I WAS WITH MY POP YESTERDAY.
I LOVE HIM-- I MEAN, LOVE HIM, YOU KNOW?
BUT THERE WE ARE, WAITING FOR THE VERDICT ON MY MOM WHILE HE CRACKS ONE-LINERS ABOUT YOU AND ME BEING PRIVATE EYES.
AND ALL THE WHILE, MY MOM'S BLINDNESS IS TEARING AT US, LIKE... LIKE IT'S SAYING, "WHEN ARE YOU GUYS GOING TO GET DOWN TO IT?"


SORRY...I...
...I... I THOUGHT/GHT YOUR OFFICE WAS OPEN FOR BUSINESS.
IT IS. IF YOU'RE A CLIENT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
I'M DIERDRE SEVENS. I DON'T ANSWER TO THE NAME OF DEE DEE, OKAY?
YOU'VE GOT IT, DIERDRE.
I'M TED DENNING.
THE MAN HOBBLING ABOUT OVER THERE--
OOPS
--LOOKING PITIFUL, IS MY PARTNER, BOB RAINIER.
FINE.
I'M A CASE WORKER FOR THE CITY.
THIS A LEGAL AID JOB?
NO.
I'M NOT SURE COMING HERE IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO... THERE'S A PART OF ME THAT ARGUES IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS AND I DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING.
THAT'S THE VOICE I'D LIKE TO LISTEN TO.
UH HUH.
BUT THAT'S NOT THE VOICE YOU'RE LISTENING TO.
CAN'T. IT'S THE EASY VOICE. SO SUE ME. I SAW 'PINOCCHIO' WHEN I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD, AND EVER SINCE, I WANTED TO BE JIMINY CRICKET.
HE'S THE ONE SUPPOSED TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT. AREN'T YOU, GEPETTO?
MY PROBLEM WAS, I ALWAYS IDENTIFIED WITH FIGARO THE CAT.
20

THE OTHER NIGHT, I GOT A CALL FROM A WOMAN I USED TO GO TO SCHOOL WITH. SHE DIDN'T CALL TO TRADE RECIPES OR REMINISCE ABOUT THE GOOD OLD DAYS.
THE OTHER NIGHT, I GOT A CALL FROM A WOMAN I USED TO GO TO SCHOOL WITH. SHE DIDN'T CALL TO TRADE RECIPES OR REMINISCE ABOUT THE GOOD OLD DAYS.
SHE'S MARRIED TO A GOOD LOOKING CHARMER NAMED DOUG WHO JUST HAPPENS TO BEAT THE HELL OUT OF HER.
OH BOY.
OKAY, 25 PERCENT OF THE MARRIAGES IN THE GOOD OLD U.S. OF A. HAVE SERIOUS INCIDENTS OF WIFE ABUSE.
YOU UNDERSTAND, WE ARE NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT BEATINGS HERE.
IS THIS ONE OF THOSE SURVEYS, LIKE, YOU KNOW, VIOLENCE ON TELEVISION?
A PIE IN THE FACE IS AN AN ACT OF VIOLENCE ON PAR WITH A HATCHET IN THE HEAD?
50 PERCENT OF THE MARRIAGES...
...HAVE WIVES BEING HIT.
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT. SOMETIMES I THINK WE DO MORE QUOTING OF STATISTICS THAN ANYTHING ELSE. COMES WITH THE TERRITORY OF THE JOB.
THE TRUTH IS, LEILA'S NOT EVEN A FRIEND REALLY, THESE DAYS...
SURE, WE'D SEND EACH OTHER CHRISTMAS CARDS THAT CHEERFULLY LIED ABOUT HOW WE'D GET TOGETHER IN THE COMING YEAR.
AND WHAT HAPPENS?
WHEN IT GETS TOO MUCH FOR HER... WHEN EVERY DREAM IS DYING...
...WHO'S THE ONLY ONE SHE CAN THINK TO CALL? ME. A MEMORY FROM SCHOOL CORRIDORS AND A NAME ON A CHRISTMAS CARD.
ISN'T THAT SAD?
SO GODDAMNED SAD.


MAYBE YOU DON'T FIND THAT SAD. MAYBE I SHOULDN'T. BUT IF YOU PRESSED ME FOR AN ANSWER WHY I WENT TO HER PLACE THAT NIGHT, THAT'S THE ONLY ANSWER I CAN COME UP WITH.
LIKE I OWED HER...
...BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT I WAS THE ONLY HUMAN BEING IN THE WORLD SHE COULD TURN TO. OH, I TRIED TO USE MY PROFESSIONAL VOICE. BUT SHE WAS BLINDED LIKE AN ANIMAL STUCK IN CAR LIGHTS.

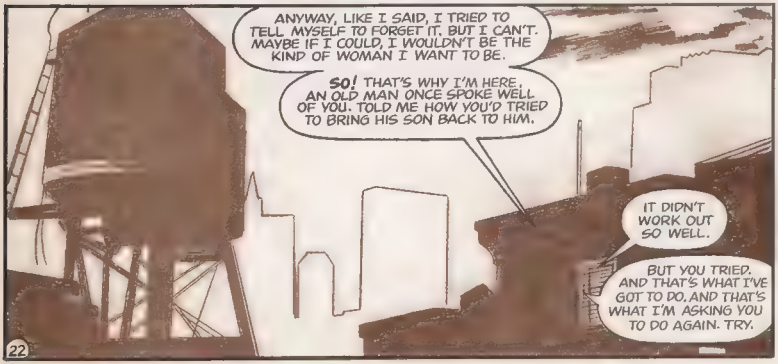
THE CAR COMES CLOSER.
CLOSER.
SMACK

ugh

MIND?
HELP YOURSELF.

uumph

THAT STUFF'S TERRIBLE.
IT'S THE DELI'S SPECIALTY, TERRIBLE COFFEE.
MY FRIEND HERE, HE WOULDN'T DRINK ANY OTHER KIND.
HE KEEPS PRAYING THEY'LL PUT IN A DUNKIN' DONUTS UP THE BLOCK.


ANYWAY, LIKE I SAID, I TRIED TO TELL MYSELF TO FORGET IT. BUT I CAN'T. MAYBE IF I COULD, I WOULDN'T BE THE KIND OF WOMAN I WANT TO BE.
SO! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE. AN OLD MAN ONCE SPOKE WELL OF YOU. TOLD ME HOW YOU'D TRIED TO BRING HIS SON BACK TO HIM.
IT DIDN'T WORK OUT SO WELL.
BUT YOU TRIED. AND THAT'S WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO. AND THAT'S WHAT I'M ASKING YOU TO DO AGAIN. TRY.

TRY WHAT? THIS IS A DOMESTIC SITUATION. WE CAN'T BREAK INTO THE HOUSE.
I KNOW THAT. I WAS HOPING YOU COULD FOLLOW HIM FOR A FEW DAYS. HE'S INVOLVED IN SOME HUSH-HUSH PROJECT THAT'S SUPPOSED TO CATAPAULT HIM INTO A HIGH INCOME TAX BRACKET.
BUT HE'S BEING VERY SECRETIVE ABOUT IT. MAYBE THERE ISN'T ANY BIG PROJECT AT ALL, JUST AN ALIBI FOR COMING HOME LATE AT NIGHT, FOR HAVING ANOTHER WOMAN ON THE SIDE.
IF SO... IF LEILA KNEW HE WASN'T FAITHFUL... MAYBE IT WOULD PUT THE CAR LIGHTS ON HIM AND SHE'D GET HERSELF SOME HELP.
ARE YOU HEARING ALL THIS, TED?
SHE'S TRYING TO TALK US INTO FOLLOWING A GUY WHOSE WIFE DOESN'T EVEN WANT HIM FOLLOWED.
UH... TED... YOU DID UNDERSTAND HER?
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE, MAN! COME ON NOW! YOU'RE LETTING HER GET TO YOU. YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT DOING IT!
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO. I KNOW THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYES.
LOOK, NO MATTER WHAT SHE SAYS, THIS IS NUTS! IT'S NUTS FOR YOU! IT'S NUTS FOR US! AND WHO'S FOOTING THE BILL FOR THIS?
WHAT WOULD THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY PAY YOU FOR A JOB? ABOUT THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS IS THE GOING RATE, CORRECT?
THERE! WHO I MAKE THE CHECK OUT TO?
DIERDRE... YOU ARE SOMETHING ELSE!

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE SECOND ISSUE.

Earth Island's "DO-IT YOURSELF" SDI Survival Test

SDI's BACKERS CLAIM IT WILL DESTROY 95% OF INCOMING MISSILES...

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

TO FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF...

...**TAKE 1** "IMPREGNABLE" LID FROM A STEEL DRUM...

...**MARK OFF** 5% OF THE SURFACE AREA.

FIND HOW MANY DIME-SIZED HOLES WOULD FILL THIS SPACE.

DRILL THE SAME NUMBER OF HOLES IN THE SURFACE OF THE SHIELD.

ERECT YOUR "$1 TRILLION SDI SHIELD" OVER A ROADMAP OF THE U.S.A.

NOTE: SDI LEAVES US OPEN TO ATTACK FROM ALL SIDES.

BUY 3⅓ LBS. OF SMALL BLACK BEANS (=10,000 WARHEADS) + 33⅓ LBS. OF SMALL WHITE BEANS (= 100,000 DECOYS.)

MIX THE BEANS TOGETHER IN A LARGE PAIL.

BEANS

BALLISTIC BUCKET

DEPLOY THE BALLISTIC BEANS! THIS SIMULATES AN ATTACK EQUAL TO ⅓ OF THE TOTAL USSR NUCLEAR THROW-WEIGHT.

IF EVERYTHING WORKS...
"ONLY" 5500 BEANS WILL HIT THE USA. OF THOSE, "ONLY" 500 WILL RESULT IN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS.

REMOVE "DEFENSE SHIELD." IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE EXPECTED 5% "LEAK" WOULD RESULT IN 100,000,000 DEATHS.

TEST RESULTS

WHICH CITIES ON THE MAP WERE HIT?

WAS YOUR HOMETOWN HIT?

IF THE U.S.S.R. HAD DEPLOYED ITS ENTIRE NUCLEAR ARSENAL INSTEAD OF THE ⅓ USED IN THIS TEST, HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD DIE?

IF 100,000 TO 300,000,000 OF YOUR FELLOW AMERICANS DIED BECAUSE S.D.I. DID NOT PROTECT THEM, WOULD S.D.I. HAVE BEEN WORTH THE 71 MILLION DOLLARS PER DAY PRESIDENT REAGAN HAS ASKED TO FUND IT?

IF YOU HAD 71 MILLION DOLLARS A DAY TO SPEND ON OUR COUNTRY, WHAT WOULD **YOU** DO WITH IT?

EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE
300 BROADWAY, SUITE 28
SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94133-3312

Art © 1987 Mark Nelson.

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Detectives Inc.

THE MOVIE

Photo: Eric Goto

Director of Photography, Mark Gasper, bakes under the hot lights waiting for Director/Writer Don McGregor to decide what the next shot should be.

Photo: Eric Goto

A quiet moment on a sweltering set, as the director tries to figure out what the writer really wants for this scene.

This is the short version of how Detectives Inc.–The Movie came to be.

* * *

The man kept telling me, "You don't understand, Don, I can show tits. You understand what I'm saying? Tits!"

I understood what he was saying.

We were seated in his plush office on 57th Street, set high off the ground, with the exterior wall entirely made of glass that showcased a beautiful view of Central Park. The year was 1978, I believe, sometime after the publication of a book I had written called *Dragonflame*. Dragon was a Vietnam vet before Stallone was, who had returned to New York City and was motivated into action by the violence and inhumanity he witnessed on the streets of Manhattan more than he was by guilty memories of Vietnam or his ostracization from civilian society when he returned home. He had no desire to be a vigilante, questioned his sanity, but could not stand idly by while others were being victimized.

The man in the office was talking about producing a series of shows for HBO. The pay-cable stations were just beginning to scout around for new properties that they could use for their own original programming. The man thought Dragon might possibly be a good character to pitch to cable, provided I made a few slight changes in his personality. He wanted Dragon to kill all the pimps on 42nd Street and become King Pimp of Times Square.

"And remember, Don, I can show tits. On T.V.! Got it?"

I got it. I said thanks, but no thanks, took one last view of Central Park from on high, and left.

Now, I have nothing against nudity, as any regular readers of my work know. All people are naked at one time or another. If they aren't, these folks are in desperate trouble. I also have nothing against sexual

Photo: Steve Bryant

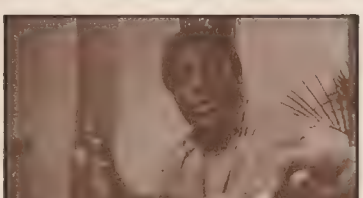
Director/Writer Don McGregor faces his principal cast, Alex Simmons, Richard Douglass and Marsha Childers McGregor, who all seem to have different reactions to Don's interpretation of a scene.

Photo: Jane Aruns

Director/Writer Don McGregor and Alex Simmons discuss approach to Denning's character. This is what is referred to as having artistic differences.

Text by Don McGregor

Design by Eric Goto



Ted Denning (Alex Simmons) reacts to the gun Rainier is loading. By the way, the gun used in the photograph on the previous page has a plugged barrel, and cannot be loaded or fired. The gun in this photo can be fired and was used with strict caution.

situations in my stories. Again, the past work speaks for itself. If I don't understand a character's sexuality (even if the character chooses abstinence) then I feel I really don't understand who that character is. And, last, but certainly not least, I like breasts. That wasn't my problem. My problem was, I knew this man did not comprehend who Dragfonflame was, or why I had chosen to write about him. No matter how many discussions we had, no matter how many words I spoke, whether I was eloquent or not, it would not make any difference; he would never understand why I would not make Dragon "King Pimp of Times Square."

I wanted to do movies, but not that badly.

* * *

Go back even further.

Before I wrote my first comic, back when I was fifteen, I commandeered by father's 8mm Bolex camera and made a 2½ minute private eye movie. I learned a couple of facts very early. If you wrote, directed and starred in the movie, you always won the fights and you always got the girl. As a teenager, this was infinitely preferable to real life.

I wrote that first *Detectives Inc.* comic in 1968, which appeared in a fanzine drawn by my friend, Alex Simmons. By 1970, I had not only written a second Detectives comic script, but a screenplay for Denning and Rainier called, "Death Game in Three Dimensions." Alex was going to play Denning; I was going to play Rainier, and I thought we'd have a helluva good time.

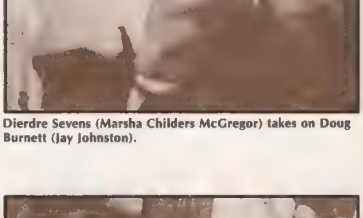
Somewhere in that time period Marvel Comics called me to New Yortk for editorial assistant work. That's a glorified title for "flunky." We never got around to filming Detectives.

But I had never lost the thought.

* * *

Some time in the late 1970s I worked on a screenplay for a guy who had written a book about pussycats going berserk and killing peoole. It was as bad as it sounds. I thought injecting some humanity and humor into the proceedings while adhering strictly to the plot might help. It was an uneasy collaboration at best, full of Hollywood promises, but there was only one that held any real importance for me: the original writer claimed he had 16mm film stock that was left over from a previous project he had worked on and that he would give me as part of the inducement for working on this puddytat massacre. The Hollywood promises and the highly-mentioned-but-never-seen film stock

Dierdre Sevens (Marsha Childers McGregor) takes on Doug Burnett (Jay Johnston).

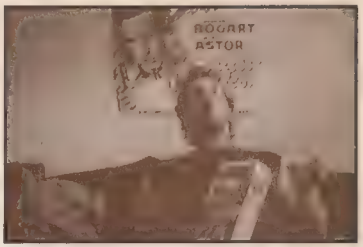


A fight scene like this takes time, patience and skill. Fight choreography, like ballet, must be exactingly executed. No one ad libs in a stunt situation.

Curruther's chauffeur (Ron Barry) delivers a high, hard kick to Dierdre Sevens' (Marsha Childers McGregor's) head. Ron's speed and accuracy were amazing.

Photo: Jane Aruns

Producer Ed Via wonders if the director would be able to speak if his hands were tied behind his back.



Bob Rainier (Richard Douglass) has his version of a hearty breakfast. Bogart looks on disapprovingly.

went up in smoke, quicker than an old reel of film on nitrate stock can burn.

Once again, I put *Detectives Inc.* as a movie on hold.

* * *

About a year later, I talked with Dean Mullaney, Eclipse Comics' founder, about doing a graphic album version of Denning and Rainier. The book was published in 1980 and was illustrated by Marshall Rogers. The script was a highly revised version of the scripts from the late 1960s. All the personal factors in the two detectives lives remained, only the cases they undertook were changed.

In 1985, *Detectives Inc.* was reprinted as a two-part microseries.

Detectives Inc. was, as they put it in movie lingo, a "property." It existed. You could hold it in your hands. You could like or dislike it, but you could not deny its existence. *Detectives Inc.* was now legitimate.

* * *

As the video revolution progressed in the 80s, I began flirting with the idea of reviving *Detectives Inc.* as a movie project. With Camcorders becoming the rage, and lowering in price even as they became more sophisticated, I was intrigued by the idea that there must be a way to utilize this new electronic medium to realize my dreams about translating *Detectives Inc.* into the movies. The major stumbling block seemed to be editing the tapes once you had finished shooting the movie.

I had discussed my desire to do a *Detectives Inc.* movie several times over the years. I knew a movie version of *Sabre*, say, would be beyond feasibility, because the series required futuristic settings and costuming that would cost a fortune. *Detectives Inc.*, though, was contemporary, and if I could find a way to get hold of a video camera, I knew I had five of the greatest sets in the world at my disposal: New York City's boroughs.

Well, it wasn't quite that simple or easy, but the timing finally jelled. Not in the way that I had imagined. It seldom ever does.

In fact, until the day it came into "active play," I had been researching and structuring and jotting down snatches of dialogue for a new comic series about the duo. Becoming involved in a movie version had been set on a distant back burner.

The new storyline concerned the bombing of abortion clinics. It was 1985, when I was involved with those initial phases of the new book, that worrisome time when disparate elements of character, plot and theme are a chaotic jumble; the time period when editors would like to hear only enthusiasm and

Photo: Jane Anuns

Director/Writer Don McGregor makes believe he is hard of hearing when he is told it is time to let Richard Douglass as Bob Rainier play his scene with DéAnna Cross as a Manhattan hooker. Can you blame him?

DéAnna Cross uses a lollipop as a prop more effectively than Telly Savales ever did.

confidence from creators and the time when you might be enthusiastic but are at your least confident.

I hadn't really thought much about a movie version in some time, the day the two phone calls came that suddenly made me have to shift focus to the actuality of doing it. Two phone calls that shifted the movie from a distant dream to a great possibility.

It was going to require a great deal more than talk.

The first call was from Alex Simmons. Alex has always been multi-talented. He had more or less abandoned illustration in favor of acting, but the man has always done a multitude of creative endeavors. He sings and writes, among other things besides acting, and he is capable of doing his own stunts. He is the only man in the world I have ever let swing an axe at my head, and trusted implicitly, but that's another story, for the long version of how this movie came to be. As a part of that phone conversation, Alex mentioned to me that he had met a video editor at N.Y.U. with whom I might be able to talk, and could advise me about editing obstacles.

It just happened that Ed Via called me that night, when the news was fresh and exciting in my mind. I might not have mentioned my conversation with Alex if he had called a day or two later. Who knows? Not me, Kemo Sabe.

Ed and I were having one of our marathon phone conversations on movies, comics, and life in general. Ed was enduring my plethora of Ronald Reagan jokes. He told me I didn't do it as well as Johnny Carson. And somewhere in there I mentioned that Alex had called and maybe there was more of a possibility that I would do that *Detectives Inc.* movie.

Now, as a backdrop, but a quick one, because this is the abbreviated story of how *Detectives Inc. – The Movie* came to be, Ed and I have known each other for many years. Like Dean Mullaney, Ed is the type of man who is honest, whose word is as good as his bond. This is one of the reasons I have always loved working with and for Dean, and why we are still best of buddies after more than a decade of working together, when the pressures of any given project can be more than enough to destroy superficial friendships.

Ed asked me how much I thought it would cost to do a *Detectives Inc.* movie. Well, of course, I told him I really didn't have the faintest idea, since I hadn't actually been involved in such a production, but I gave him what I thought was a reasonable guess. I am very bad at guesses. I wasn't anywhere near right as a guestimate, but that figure was given before decisions were made to shoot the movie in a much more sophisticated, technically exacting, professional manner. Over-the-market Camcorders were out.

There were some people who thought I was out of my mind, to attempt writing and directing as my debut into movies. Stay in your own niche, boy. This is our bailiwick, and we know the score.

To be fair, they were probably at least partially correct in their assumption that I was crazy.

I found attitudes in movie making consistent with those I had faced in the comics medium, right from the very beginning, especially during my tenure on the *Black Panther.* Rules are set in concrete. You can do this. You can't do that. Etc. Etc.

Alex Simmons practices aiming a pistol. Director/Writer Don McGregor offers no criticism. Neither does Richard Douglass. Not when Alex is holding the gun.

Denning and Rainier (Alex Simmons and Richard Douglass) turn to each other when the going gets tough.

Director/Writer Don McGregor tells Alex Simmons that will volunteer as stunt double for the love scene with Vera Lawrence, so that he can be ready for the stunt where Denning gets tossed over a car hood.

Artistic differences are once again resolved and Ted Denning (Alex Simmons) embraces Vera Lawrence warmly. Alex has convinced the director that acting is all hard work and no play.

They have an expression in the movie business. If you are, say, writing and directing, they say you are wearing "Two hats." If, God forbid, you should also have the audacity to act in the damn thing, you are wearing "Three hats," and most people are certain that unless you are Clint Eastwood you are madder than the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland* if you do so. Just contemplating that you might try such a thing would convince some that if you aren't crazy, then you must be supremely arrogant. How dare you!

Actually, I think, it is merely a belief in your work, in the characters that you create. I think it is a belief in the essential worth of those characters, a belief in your knowledge of them, since you have lived with them so intimately through all the creative stages until the story is complete. If you believe in what you are doing with intensity, people often fail to see the other, frailer side, the part of you that is insecure, that doubts you will ever be able to tell the story correctly, find the way to make a scene work, get inside those characters until you laugh and bleed and weep with them. The spectres of uncertainty are always there; you just don't let the ghosts stop you.

I had toyed with the idea of playing Rainier. It would have been fun to work with my wife, Marsha Childers McGregor, and Alex in that fashion.

It was not the fact that some would be appalled that I was wearing, "Three! Count 'em, - GODDAMNED THREE HATS!" that stopped me. It was not the fact that I had had some heart problems in the previous year that made me decide not to play Rainier.

None of that mattered.

Want to know the real reason?

I didn't want to have to memorize all the lines the cockamamie writer gave to the performers. I mean, there were these long soliloquies, there was this rapid banter, there were all kinds of dialogue that would have to be learned. I figured I'd skip that, and that's the real reason I didn't play Rainier. Besides, I look terrible in three hats.

Anyhow, despite my belief in Rainier, in knowing him, despite my ideas for his future, and events I will eventually reveal about his past (the same holds true for Denning, obviously), there is a fact that stands. I cannot do what Marsha and Alex can do. I have watched Marsha struggle and worry about a role, as I do with writing, with all the ghosts trying to stop her, and I have watched her bring this new character to life. It is a special magic she has, full of light and strength, of joy and pain, and her eyes can tell it all to you in a quick, cutting second of blinding truth. I watched Alex prepare for the scene with his father (played by another old time friend, artist/actor Billy Graham.) There were some lines Alex didn't have down completely in several long speeches. There is much more interaction between father and son in the movie version. Alex went off by himself for fifteen minutes, came back, and the lines were there, his emotions were sparkling.

If it had been me, I'd have wanted to know where the cue cards were.

Detectives Inc. – The Movie, The Short Version will continue next issue.

Photo: Eric Gato

Caroline Carrigan as Constance Haynes and Marsha Childers McGregor as Dierdre Sevens prepare for a tense confrontation.

The trio together, like modern Three Musketeers.

1787 Constitutional Bi-Centennial 1987

REMOVE THOSE ARMBANDS OR YOU'LL BE SUSPENDED.
WE'RE WEARING THEM TO PROTEST THE WAR...
SCHOOLS ARE FOR LEARNING, NOT DEMONSTRATING!
DON'T COME BACK UNTIL YOU'VE TAKEN THEM OFF.
THE STUDENTS SUE THE SCHOOL AND WIN IN THE U.S. SUPREME COURT.
IN OUR SYSTEM, STATE-OPERATED SCHOOLS MAY NOT BE ENCLAVES OF TOTALITARIANISM.
SCHOOL OFFICIALS DO NOT POSSESS ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY OVER THEIR STUDENTS. STUDENTS... ARE 'PERSONS'.*
*TINKER V. DES MOINES INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, 1969
BUT ARMBANDS AT SCHOOL COULD CAUSE DISTURBANCES!
OUR CONSTITUTION SAYS WE MUST TAKE THIS RISK...
...AND OUR HISTORY SAYS THAT IT IS THIS SORT OF FREEDOM... THAT IS THE BASIS OF OUR NATIONAL STRENGTH...
STUDENTS' RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED BY THE CONSTITUTION!
EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW
WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO DISAGREE!
BUT THIS PROTECTION IS ONLY EFFECTIVE WHEN STUDENTS KNOW THEIR RIGHTS AND INSIST ON THEM.

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ECLIPSE

DON McGREGOR MARSHALL ROGERS

Detectives Inc.

Mystery Magazine says: "**Detectives, Inc.** is a hard-hitting story told in brutally realistic terms...

"Detectives, Inc. is a dramatic book: It is tense and powerful and draws one into its action...It is easy to be attracted to a Captain America or a Superman, because he is a dream, an ideal. It is less easy to become attracted to a human being, and this is one of the things that Don McGregor and Marshall Rogers do here: they assert (and show) that two detectives, the divorced wife, two lovers separated by death from their common object of passion and others, can be just as exciting, as powerful, as dramatic an ensemble as the Avengers or the Justice League of America."

Peter Gillis
COMICS FEATURE

"This book has it all: nudity, homosexuality, bisexuality, abortion, poverty, race wars...and murder. Yet it lacks one thing that typical overground comics revel in—and that's sensationalism."

WHIZZARD

"Like a raw, cutting wind of the golden age of the private eye, *Detectives, Inc.* is gritty, very human, good reading and an eyeful."

Chris Steinbrunner, author of
The Films of Sherlock Holmes

"A solid private eye yarn with sparkling dialogue and two private dicks who care. If Culp and Cosby had been eyes instead of spies, this is what they would have been like."

Bob Randisi, author of
The Disappearance of Penny

"The writing and illustrations owe far more to the techniques of the motion picture than to comic books, with cross cutting and other film innovations used most effectively to tell the story of a murder with roots in a lesbian love affair."

Ellery Queen
Mystery Magazine

"*Detectives Inc.* is a tour de force for writer/creator Don McGregor and illustrator Marshall Rogers.

It is one of the new breed of mature underground productions that places people and relationships ahead of superheroism and bizarre, horrific plots.

McGregor's Culp and Cosby type detective team of Ted Denning and Bob Rainier live in a Philip Marlowe existence on the seamy side of 1980 New York. Although the plot is fairly simple, their lives are refreshingly complex and the two stories are well blended with the help of Rogers' excellent black and white illustrations. His use of light and shadow in the delineation of people and perfectly rendered New York locations mark this volume as his best work to date.

With *Detectives Inc.*, a new team of talented storytellers is born — one that should be writing new pages in the history of the graphic novel for some time to come."

Howard Zimmerman
Editor/STARLOG Magazine

See page 32 for ordering information for the graphic album or color series

BACK ISSUES ARE BACK IN STOCK!

We are happy to offer you back issues of Eclipse Comics and Albums. Because so many people have inquired about or sent money for material that is temporarily out of stock, we are listing the status of EVERY item Eclipse has ever published, whether available or not at this time. Check future ads, as new titles will be added and many "sold out" items will be back in stock as soon as we acquire copies to sell.

This ad good JULY 1, 1987 through SEPT. 1, 1987.

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(Becomes Laser Eraser)

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4 ..... 4.00
5 ..... 2.00
6 ..... SOLD OUT
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11 ..... 4.00
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(Becomes B&W Comic)

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9 ..... 3.50
10 ..... SOLD OUT
11 ..... 4.00
12 ..... 5.00
13 ..... 3.00
14 ..... 3.00
15 ..... SOLD OUT
16 ..... SOLD OUT
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2 ..... 1.25
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(See also 3-D List)

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9 ..... 2.25

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10 ..... 1.25
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(See also 3-D List)

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7 ..... 1.50
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9 ..... 1.50
10 ..... 1.50
11 ..... 1.50
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(See also 3-D List)

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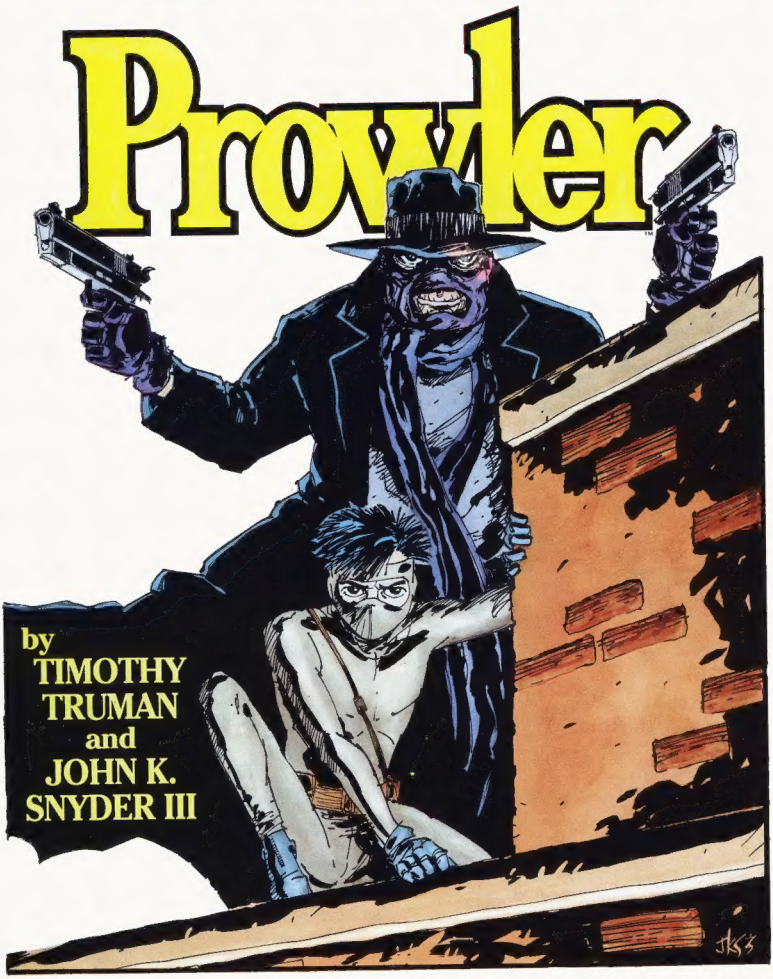

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